

Father Patrick O'Dowd, St. Alphonsus pastor, attempted to solve the problem by purchasing a parcel of land at the corner of Atlantic and Panocha, planning for a chapel in the area. But the Korean War and freeways intervened.

Only through the efforts of two local residents, Alex Perez and Ben Garcia, was a Catholic committee formed in 1954 to survey the area, raise funds and communicate their plan for a church to Cardinal James Francis McIntyre. By early 1957 their hard work was rewarded when Auxiliary Bishop Timothy Manning sent them this encouraging letter: "I join with you that this year will see the completion of our plans for Bandini. We have purchased the extra property we needed." On June 14, 1957, the parish of St. Marcellinus was established, with Father Thomas G. Hayes named the founding pastor.

The 42-year-old New Orleans native started his first pastorate by searching for a location to celebrate Mass. On Sunday, July 14, in the upstairs dining room of Kelly's Restaurant, he celebrated the first Mass for 120 faithful and claimed that Christ had come to Bandini and gathered his friends around him in another "upper room."

A crew of parishioners "rigged the upper room for church" for 10 weeks until a former Protestant church became "home." Eventually a plot at Strong Avenue and Harbor Street was available and by Holy Saturday, 1959, Father Hayes sang the first High Mass in the new church.

Although several historical sources differ on the name and rank of St. Marcellinus (some claim he was a pope, others a martyred priest), it is recorded that many miracles have occurred in his name. Kind of like the phenomenon of this parish surviving in the midst of freeways and commerce.

HONORING JOE RAY STEWART

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to rise today to honor Joe Ray Stewart of Houka, Mississippi, for his fine service to our Nation during the Second World War.

Mr. Stewart served in the European Theatre under Generals Patton and Eisenhower, and built bridges wherever needed. In December 1944, the soldiers of the 249th Engineer Combat Battalion moved from building a bridge on the Saar River to the Ardennes, to block German advances in the Battle of the Bulge. The battalion was then assigned to the engineer task force charged to cross the Rhine River in Germany, and later tasked with securing and maintaining the bridges on the Rhine.

It has come to my attention that during his deployment, Mr. Stewart fought in three major battles, including the Battle of the Bulge, advanced to the rank of Corporal, and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for bravery in action.

The family of Joe Ray Stewart, residing in Tennessee's Seventh District, joins me in recognizing a beloved and great American. As with all who serve in our Armed Forces, our veterans' dedication and selflessness has allowed our Nation the enduring blessing of freedom and democracy.

I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in honoring Joe Ray Stewart and remembering the service of all those veterans who risked their lives to defend our country and the entire free world.

DONNA SHALALA, PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM RECIPIENT

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride and happiness that our country is honoring one of South Florida's most outstanding citizens and a dear friend, Dr. Donna Shalala. This week Dr. Shalala will be awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which is the highest civilian award in the United States. This is indeed a tremendous honor and her lifetime of service to our Nation is a testament to her humility of character and steadfastness of vision. She was born in Cleveland and graduated from the Western College for Women. Dr. Shalala's enthusiasm for education did not cease after she received her bachelor's degree but grew alongside her passion for government and civic service as witnessed by the time she spent as a Peace Corps volunteer.

Having received her masters and then doctorate at Syracuse University, Dr. Shalala started an illustrious teaching career that started at the City University of New York and continued at Columbia. With great teaching experience, she commenced her professional path in academic administration as the President of Hunter College, then as the Chancellor of Wisconsin-Madison and finally in the position she now holds as the President of the University of Miami, my alma mater.

Dr. Shalala's career has also expanded into the realm of government where she has held many positions in varying departments. She was the Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research in the Carter administration and the Chair of the Children's Defense Fund in 1992. Most significantly, she was the Secretary of Health and Human Service for the eight years of the Clinton administration.

In March of 2007, Dr. Shalala was named co-chair, along with former Senator Bob Dole, of the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors. Her knowledge and experience with the health care system proved invaluable as the Commission crafted its final report.

I am proud to represent Donna Shalala as a Congresswoman and delighted to share in this momentous occasion with her family and peers. More importantly I am honored to call her a friend.

GLADSTONE ALL-AMERICA CITY AWARD

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating the outstanding achieve-

ment of the city of Gladstone, Missouri, for being named one of the 10 winners of the National Civic League's 2008 All-America City Award. The award recognizes communities that identify community-wide challenges and successfully deal with those challenges head on. Gladstone was one of 17 finalists for the award, and the only city in the Kansas City area that was a finalist this year.

Gladstone on the Move, a citizen-based organization that identified long-range goals for the city, played a large role in making Gladstone stand out as an All-America City. Its recommendations included a property tax increase to pay for additional ambulance service, public improvements, an extension of a sales tax for the beautiful new community center, as well as a strong neighborhood revitalization program. The city of Gladstone should be proud of the way it effectively identified and met the needs of their residents.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in applauding Gladstone's city leaders and residents for their example of excellence as a winner of the National Civic League's 2008 All-America City. Their pride in their community and drive to keep improving their city should be commended and I am proud to represent them in Congress.

HONORING MR. AND MRS. MIGUEL NEGRON

HON. ALBIO SIRES

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. and Mrs. Miguel Negron on being honored by the Puerto Rican Cultural Committee of Hoboken on Saturday, June 21, 2008. Miguel and Nelly Negron came to the United States in the 1950s from Utado, Puerto Rico, through Patchogue, Long Island, before establishing themselves in Hoboken, New Jersey, in 1963. With their two children, Edith and Ivette, the Negrons began a new life and started their long commitment to their community. Miguel joined his cousin Israel Bula as a partner in the Bula Superette located in First and Garden Street in Hoboken. He later left the partnership and bought a bodega on his own where he and Nelly spent 6 days a week serving the neighborhood with native Hispanic food products for a total of 22 years.

In 1982 Nelly retired, and in 1985 Miguel joined her in retirement, although they hardly rested. Instead they cared for their three grandchildren. Miguel also continued to support his community by investing in real estate around the neighborhood and offering investment advice to his friends and neighbors.

Mr. and Mrs. Negron currently reside in the Caparra Home Townhouses in Hoboken, New Jersey, and are faithful parishioners of Saint Francis Church. The couple has been married